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General Assembly
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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Fifty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 22 April 2004 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

While the international community awaits a response from the United Nations Security Council with regard to the recent developments in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the latest extrajudicial execution committed by the Israeli occupying forces on Saturday, 17 April 2004, Israel, the occupying Power, continues unrestrained to carry out its violent military campaign against the Palestinian people. As the attacks and assaults by the occupying forces on the Palestinian civilian population intensify, Israeli Prime Minister Sharon has also vowed to continue targeting Palestinian leaders for assassination, escalating tensions and ensuring the rapid deterioration of this already critical and dangerous situation.

Beginning on Tuesday, 20 April 2004, the Israeli occupying forces launched a raid on the town of Beit Lahiya in the northern Gaza Strip. Four Palestinians were killed by the occupying forces during attacks carried out in the area on Tuesday. Backed by helicopter gunships and dozens of tanks, the occupying forces continued the raid and assaults yesterday, killing a total of 8 Palestinians, including a 12-year-old boy, Mohammed Taleb Al-Da'uor. Also, today, another Palestinian boy, Mohammed Al-Malfouh, 17 years old, was killed by the occupying forces and at least 25 others were wounded, including an 8-year-old shot in the stomach.

The firing of tank shells and machine-gun fire, as well as helicopter missile fire, by the Israeli occupying forces also resulted in the wounding of at least 45 other Palestinians in Beit Lahiya. Some of those shot dead or wounded by the occupying forces were youths who had just been throwing stones at the tanks and jeeps that had raided the town. In addition to the casualties caused by the assaults, the occupying forces raided numerous homes, terrorizing many families throughout the town. Several of the homes were seriously damaged by the attacks and a number of fields were also destroyed by Israeli bulldozers.

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The continuing use by Israel, the occupying Power, of excessive, indiscriminate and disproportionate force against the Palestinian civilian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, constitutes a grave breach of international humanitarian law and of Israel's obligations as an occupying Power. In addition to the killing and wounding of civilians, this has included the continued use of Palestinians as human shields, as occurred just last week in the village of Biddu. During protests against Israel's expansionist Wall in the area, the occupying forces tied a 13-year-old boy, Mohammed Badwan, to a jeep to block the jeep from stones that were being thrown by some of the demonstrators. The terrorized boy was kept on the jeep as it continued driving and was then held in Israeli detention for several hours before being released.

The fact that Israel continues to launch such aggressions and to carry out its illegal policies and practices against the Palestinian people is undoubtedly attributable to the fact that it has been permitted by the international community time and again to act with impunity, without consequence for its actions. The prevailing situation is one in which the occupying Power is not being held accountable for its serious violations and grave breaches of international law and in which the Palestinian people are left helpless and defenceless, without recourse or redress as the international community stands paralysed, unable to take the necessary actions to address the continuing decline of the situation and the increasing violence and instability in the area.

All of the above is occurring at the same time that the Israeli Prime Minister is peddling his unilateral "disengagement" plan to the international community and, indeed, receiving assurances in this respect that completely disregard the relevant provisions of international law. Moreover, far from actually taking measures for a complete withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, it seems apparent that the occupying Power is seeking to continue to incur widespread destruction and loss of life, attempting to render Gaza a wasteland prior to any "Israeli withdrawal" and the subsequent imprisonment of the 1.2 million Palestinians living there without access to ports or border crossings in accordance with the Israeli plan.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 187 letters to you regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 19 April 2004 (A/ES-10/264-S/2004/304), constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by the Israeli occupying forces against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of the war crimes, State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

Accordingly, in follow-up to the above-mentioned letters, I regret to inform you that, since our last letter to you just three days ago, at least 19 Palestinians, including several children, have been killed by the Israeli occupying forces, raising the total number of martyrs killed since September 2000 to 2,914 Palestinians. (The names of the martyrs that have been identified are contained in the annex to this letter.)

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nasser **Al-Kidwa**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

Annex to the identical letters dated 22 April 2004 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Names of martyrs killed by the Israeli occupying forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem* (Tuesday, 20 April 2004, to Thursday, 22 April 2004)

Tuesday, 20 April 2004

1. Ajmeea'n Ali Abu Shaqoreh
2. Mua'tasam Rafiq Naseer (18 years old)
3. Kahldoon Ziad Abu Jirad
4. Mujahed Abdelqader Abu Awad
5. Ibrahim Besheer Riyan (18 years old)
6. Mohammed Ibrahim Attah Al-Tanany

Wednesday, 21 April 2004

1. Ra'fat Sobhi Abu Haseera
2. Radwan Samarah Hamato (16 years old)
3. Suhail Abdelkarim Al-Harsh
4. Mohammed Abdelmutlib Al-Ajoury (18 years old)
5. Mohammed Khidr Al-Rantisi
6. Ziad Ahmed Abu Hamada
7. Mohammed Taleb Al-Da'uor (12 years old)
8. Ayoub Mohammed Karsowa

Thursday, 22 April 2004

1. Hilal Ali Musa Abu Eisha
2. Ayman Yussef Fayez Barahna
3. Ghanim Mahmoud Ghanim
4. Mohammed Rasim Al-Malfouh (17 years old)
5. Omar Ahmed Ali

* The total number of Palestinian martyrs killed by the Israeli occupying forces since 28 September 2000 is 2,914.